

Career Development Practice

RUNNING HEAD: CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Reviewing Psychologists' Qualifications for Career Development Practice in Australia

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Abstract

Vocational psychology and the practice of career development are important dimensions of the psychology discipline and profession. This paper contains an overview of Australian career development practice in light of recent trends, particularly the formalisation of career development practice amongst professions other than psychologist. Given the advent of the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners, a review of postgraduate degrees in organisational, developmental and educational, and counselling psychology was conducted to determine their correspondence with the competencies presented in the Standards. The review revealed significant consistency with generic competencies. Degrees in organisational psychology provided the broadest correspondence; however degrees in counselling, developmental and educational psychology had lower levels of correspondence on specific competencies. The implications of the review are discussed in light of the evolution of the career development industry and psychologists' standing in this field.

Reviewing Psychologists' Qualifications for Career Development Practice in Australia

The need to improve the quality of education and training for practice in the field of career development was highlighted in the international review of career guidance services conducted by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2004). Subsequent to the OECD's (2002) review of Australia's career development industry there have been a number of significant changes in the domestic scene. Most notably, Australia is currently witnessing the organisation of a new profession *Career Development Practitioner*, particularly with the establishment of Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners under the aegis of the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA, 2006). Although the professional activities of career development are not new to psychology—particularly the sub-discipline vocational psychology—the published stipulation of entry-level qualifications, continuing professional development, and competencies for practice within the Professional Standards presents both an opportunity and a threat to the more established profession of psychologist in Australia. In the context of recent changes in the career development industry in Australia, it is therefore timely to reflect on the education and training of psychologists. In this paper, we firstly overview significant changes in the career development industry in Australia and the concomitant requirements of the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners. Secondly, we report on a review of the postgraduate degrees available for psychologists. We conclude with a discussion of the implications.

For the purpose of this paper we refer to the definition of career development as “the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to

move towards a personally determined and evolving future” (CICA, 2006, p. 38). According to the Standards, a career development practitioner is a direct service provider who facilitates career development and, as a broad professional entity, may include amongst others occupations such as “career counsellors, employment counsellors, career educators, career information specialists, career management consultants, career practitioners, rehabilitation counsellors, work development officers” (CICA, 2006, p. 38). Typical career development practices can include career assessment, career counselling, and career education with individuals or groups, or the design and delivery of career information services (e.g., occupational classifications). Career development services can be delivered in a variety of settings such as educational institutions, workplaces, rehabilitation services, and mental health services. Many psychologists perform those professional activities. Indeed, psychologists have made a long-standing contribution to career development practice and vocational psychology in Australia (e.g., the development of psychometric instruments); however some scholars (e.g., Athanasou, 2008; Patton, 2005) have indicated that the position of psychologists in the field has been challenged due to a declining interest in the discipline and the rise of other professionals in the field.

Career Development and Post-industrial Society

The world-of-work in the post-industrial society is markedly different from that of previous eras. Individuals are now confronted by globalisation, deregulation of labour markets, privatisation, technological advances, changing employment patterns, changing organisational forms and structures, demographic and labour market changes, changing balance of work and non-work life, changing psychological contracts, increased job insecurity, and changes in education (Storey, 2000). In this “new” world-

of-work, the relative predictability of occupational certainty experienced by previous generations has given way to the flux and change inherent to the “knowledge society” and post-industrial economies.

Indeed, the human capital reform agenda of the Council of Australian Governments (2005) clearly indicates political pressure to move Australia toward new social, economic, and educational paradigms. Within the Australian industrial landscape, for instance, the evolution of work is typified by the rise of Enterprise Bargaining in the 1980s and 1990s, the emergence of Australian Workplace Agreements in the 21st century, and the repositioning of the traditional Award schemes. Career development theory and practice within Australia must likewise evolve abreast all this change (McMahon, Patton, & Tatham, 2003). There are, of course, significant attendant implications for the education, training, and professional development of psychologists within Australia, as well as internationally (DeBell, 2006), and it is our intention to address some of the implications within this paper from the perspective of how psychologists are educated and trained.

Career Development in Australia and Public Policy Initiatives

The Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) aims to promote a career development culture within Australia and to represent a diverse array of professional associations, as one voice. CICA consists of 11 Member Associations, namely: Australian Association of Career Counsellors, Australian Capital Territory Career Education Association, Career Advisors Association of New South Wales, Career Educators Association of the Northern Territory, Career Education Association of Victoria, Career Education Association of Western Australia, Graduate Careers Australia, National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services, Queensland

Association of Student Advisors, Queensland Guidance and Counselling Association, and the Rehabilitation Counselling Association of Australasia. Whilst individual psychologists who are members of the various Member Associations within the Career Industry Council of Australia are rightly represented according to their affiliation with their particular Member Association, the professional interests and needs of psychologists per se cannot be addressed specifically because the Australian Psychological Society (APS) is not a Member Association of CICA. Patton (2005) has asserted that these issues should be addressed by the psychology profession; presumably such representation would come from the APS.

In recent years, career development has come under close scrutiny from policy-makers interested in its capacity to deliver outcomes as a vehicle for personal and national productivity (Watts, 2000, 2005; Watts, Sweet, Haines, & McMahon, 2006). In this regard, international reviews of career development services have been undertaken by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2004), the World Bank (Watts & Fretwell, 2004), the International Labour Office (Hansen, 2006), and the European Commission (Sultana, 2004). Increasingly, career development is being viewed as a “sociopolitical instrument for advancing national goals” (Savickas, van Esbroeck, & Herr, 2005, p. 83). Thus, there is increased recognition that career development benefits individuals, as a private good, and also benefits society and government, as a public good (Watts, 1999). Though some psychologists would cautiously approach the notion of the profession being touted as a socio-political instrument, it is difficult to imagine the profession being unaffected by, or disengaged from, economic and social issues and resultant public policy initiatives (cf. Medicare for clinical psychology services).

Australia is no exception when it comes to positioning career development practice as a vehicle for private and public benefit. Indeed, the macro-economic value to Australia of career development is putatively positive (Access Economics, 2006; Department of Education Science and Training, 2006). Notwithstanding the criticism Australia received from the OECD (2002) for the limited infrastructure underpinning the provision of career development services, Australia has demonstrated international leadership in promoting a career development culture (McMahon, 2005) and the construction of publicly accessible services. For example, the Australian Government has invested in a National Career Information System, presented for free public use as the website *My Future* (www.myfuture.edu.au). Furthermore, in response to the “skills shortage” within various industries, the Australian government has also funded a network of career information services under the imprimatur of *Careers Advice Australia*. These distributed services provide career-related information to Australians seeking information on how to enter various industries, typically those demanding labour supply. Perhaps the most optimistic vision of the career development industry and its contribution to nation-building in a knowledge-economy, is the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development* (Miles Morgan Australia, 2006). Under the auspices of the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training, and Youth Affairs, the Blueprint sets out those career competencies deemed necessary for Australian citizens’ engagement in lifelong career development, integrating notions of lifelong education and employability (McMahon, Patton, & Tatham, 2003).

In response to the OECD review of the training infrastructure for career development practitioners, the Australian Government funded the development and provision of *Australian Career Development Studies* (ACDS), which is a free online

education resource (www.career.edu.au). The ACDS contains modules that range from an introduction to career development for curious individuals, parents and family, or interested supporters (e.g., sports coaches, community group leaders); through to a formal training module that may be assessed for a Certificate IV in Employment Services delivered by Registered Training Organisations; and upward to a module that may be assessed and granted credit as a postgraduate unit by universities registered as providers. The ACDS is a laudable achievement of public policy and is further evidence of a developing career development culture and infrastructure in Australia.

Professional Standards

In addition to the aforementioned initiatives, the Australian Government has supported and funded CICA to develop and implement *Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners* (CICA, 2006). The political and policy impetus for the development of the Standards arose in response to the OECD review and, moreover, a request by then Commonwealth Minister for the Department of Education, Science, and Training (The Honourable Dr Brendan Nelson) that the industry self-regulate. A process of broad and inclusive consultations with industry stakeholders, commencing with the *National Forum for Career Practitioners* in 2005, resulted in the CICA releasing the Standards in 2006, with revisions in 2007. Though the Standards pertain directly to organisations under the aegis of CICA, their publication in the public domain, and their acknowledgement by the Commonwealth Government of Australia through its funding their creation, means that Australian psychologists should at least be aware of this new entity in a professional field in which they have traditionally claimed competence to practise, if not dominated.

The Professional Standards are consistent with those of other peak international career development bodies (e.g., International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance, National Career Development Association of the United States). Three important components of the Professional Standards are germane to this paper: entry-level qualifications, continuing professional development, and competencies.

The Professional Standards stipulate that the minimum entry-level qualification for Professional Career Development Practitioners is: (a) a Graduate Certificate specifically in career development studies, or (b) a Vocational Graduate Certificate specifically in career development studies, or (c) an alternative pathway to professional status which includes (i) relevant postgraduate degree qualifications, (ii) significant career industry experience, and (iii) continued professional development of knowledge and skills apropos of the Professional Standards. The alternative pathway is akin to the model used by the Colleges of the APS. The Professional Standards also stipulate the minimum-entry qualification for an Associate Career Development Practitioner; however it is qualification for “professional” status that is of focus in this paper.

The Professional Standards provide guidelines in seven *Core Competencies* of a career development practitioner, and include: (a) career development theory, (b) labour market, (c) advanced communication skills, (d) ethical practice, (e) diversity, (f) information and resource management, and (g) professional practice. The Professional Standards also stipulate competencies that are deemed *Specialisations*. The Specialisations include: (a) assessment, (b) counselling, (c) working with people with disabilities, (e) project management, and (f) employer liaison. Without any doubt, there are areas of consistency with the competencies of psychologists generally as well as

those identified as specialists. In this paper, we will elucidate the areas of consistency and insufficiency through a review.

Psychology, Career Development, and Training

For over a century, psychology has maintained a significant association with career development through its various scientific disciplines (e.g., vocational psychology, organisational psychology) and the professional disciplines that provide career development services. Within Australian psychology generally, there is a healthy volume of research pertaining to career development: for examples see Prideaux and Creed (2002) and Taft and Day (1988). Indeed, vocational psychology, and associated fields, was recently recorded as representing 10% of the research expertise of academics teaching the specialist discipline of organizational psychology (Carless & Taylor, 2006). Furthermore, the APS has acknowledged the centrality of work in peoples' lives and related psychological issues for research and practice (Winefield et al., 2002).

Historically, it has been that practitioners mainly enter the field of career development from professions such as psychology, social work, and education, with little or no previous training specific to career development. As it did to other nations, the OECD (2002) criticised Australia for the inconsistency of training and the lack of a clear qualifications framework, reporting as follows:

The professional standards in different sectors conspicuously lack any coherence or consistency. They range from TAFE and Queensland schools, where career counselling is offered by registered psychologists who are over- and/or inappropriately qualified for the task, to other sectors where no qualifications are specified at all. Too often, qualifications from apparently related fields seem to be regarded as proxies for guidance qualifications, without any verification of

whether they assure the requisite competencies or not. This risks undermining the field's credibility in the eyes of fellow-professionals and the general public (p. 22).

The OECD report paradoxically suggested that Australian psychologists may be over-qualified in some sectors. We hasten to emphasise that this assertion did not equate to a conclusion that psychologists were unqualified. Instead, it meant that practitioners with masters or doctorate qualifications may have superior degree qualifications per se, but not necessarily with sufficient content specific to the requirements for the career development industry. It is a complex point and one that requires careful consideration; and we pursue the point in this paper.

Patton (2005) noted that, within Australia, postgraduate degree qualifications specifically in career development were offered by Education Faculties; and Psychology Departments offered no specific degree majors, but only a limited number of elective units within degree programs. Postgraduate Certificates specialising in career development studies, also articulating upward to higher degrees such as Master/Doctor of Education, were (at the time of writing this paper) variously offered by the Faculties of Education at Edith Cowan University, RMIT University, Australian Catholic University, Queensland University of Technology, University of Southern Queensland, and Victoria University. With regard to psychologists' training in career development practice, there are three Colleges of the APS that claim career development (variously described) as a professional area and competency within their respective purviews (viz, Colleges of Counselling Psychologists, Educational and Developmental Psychologists, and Organisational Psychologists). Given that the APS Colleges play a significant role

in determining the content of postgraduate degrees, we now overview the requirements for those Colleges.

Organisational Psychology

A survey of organisational psychology postgraduate students' practicum work revealed substantial vocational assessment and counselling activities, with 30% and 47% of two samples indicating they had undertaken this type of professional learning experience (Carless et al., 2003). When we initially cross-referenced a descriptive study of postgraduate degrees in industrial and organisational psychology (Carless & Taylor, 2006), we found that the compulsory and elective content of the degrees described would partially align with the Professional Standards. For example, two topics that were obviously consistent with the Professional Standards, *career development* and *labour/industrial relations* were compulsory in 50% and 33%, and elective in 17% and 25% of degrees, respectively. This raised our interest in further exploring training for educational and developmental, and counselling psychologists.

Educational and Developmental Psychology

The APS acknowledges that educational and developmental psychologists provide assistance for the career guidance and school to work transition needs of adolescents and adults. However the guidelines developed by the College of Educational and Developmental Psychologists to assist universities in preparing course submissions for postgraduate programs are silent on many of the requisite competencies to prepare psychologists to engage in career development work. For example, *theoretical content* does not name the very significant body of career development theory; and *knowledge areas* does not include any of the requisite areas named previously in this paper, such as knowledge of updated information on educational,

training, and employment trends; the labour market; nor social issues. Core areas such as professional issues and skills training in interviewing, counselling, consultation, assessment and planning, implementing and evaluating educational and developmental interventions, are included. However, focus on an extensive career-related literature in career counselling and career assessment is absent. *In addition to the lack of coverage in the College's guidelines, the APS Guidelines for the Delivery of Effective Services by School Psychologists (APS, 2008) do not include career development practices which are relevant to students' educational planning and outcomes (e.g., vocational assessment of interests, skills, and abilities).*

Counselling Psychology

We noted tentative doubts being raised over counselling psychology's coverage of career development (see Pelling, 2004). Similar to the Educational and Development Psychologists' guidelines, absences are noted in the equivalent APS guidelines for the College of Counselling Psychologists, although it is noted that educational and vocational issues may be covered through formal units or electives. The situation for counselling psychologists is made more complex by the limited number of training opportunities; with a total of only four specialist Master degrees nationally, and no degrees in Queensland and New South Wales, due to the rise of clinical majors (Patton, in press; Tindle, 2007).

Students of professional postgraduate degrees in psychology that are endorsed by the APS must complete practica under supervision, and whilst undertaking a practicum must address the professional competencies of their chosen APS specialisation. For psychologists aiming to develop career assessment and intervention skills, the mandatory practicum situation is complicated by the advent of the

Professional Standards. Not only do psychologists have to comply with the APS requirements, they also have to comply with the Professional Standards if they belong to a Member Association of the CICA (Patton, in press). Such an overlap requires the management of multiple systems of competency development and sign-off, and the recording of continuing professional development. Nevertheless, there are examples of how this potentially onerous duplication of tasks can be successfully negotiated for a postgraduate degree practicum in a career development setting (e.g., McIlveen, 2004).

The Need for a [Review](#)

The issue of training in vocational psychology and career development practice has been raised as a matter of international concern, over several decades (Patton & McMahon, 2006). One of the most significant issues facing career development internationally is the shortage of training programs and professionally trained staff to deliver career services to individuals who need them (Savickas, 2001; Savickas, van Esbroeck, & Herr, 2005). In the United States, for example, the additional problem of career development being minimised or marginalised in counsellor training programs has been identified (Hartung, 2005); and given the OECD's review, that state of affairs warrants consideration in the Australian context. In a special issue of the premier journal in the field, *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, which was dedicated to considering the future of vocational psychology in the 21st century, Savickas' (2001) emphasised the need to recommit to recruitment and training of vocational psychologists due to its apparent diminishment amidst mainstream psychology. Further objectives included forging links with related disciplines, bridging the gap between science and practice, diversifying epistemology, adapting to changes in the world of work. In the tumult of increased professionalisation of career development practice,

new theoretical frameworks, and a diverse and complex array of career development client needs arising from a rapidly changing world of work, where are Australian psychologists and the professional work of career development located? Accordingly, there is a need to review the postgraduate psychology degrees that ostensibly prepare psychologists for career development practice, as respectively distinct from other postgraduate degrees (e.g., Graduate Certificate, Master of Education) and from other professionals in the career development field (e.g., career counsellors, guidance officers, human resources professionals, rehabilitation counsellors, occupational therapists, social workers).

Given that universities are the major providers of postgraduate education and training for psychologists in Australia, and that there are considerable forces inducing psychologists to study for a Master/Doctor degree in psychology, it is worthy to consider how career development is being taught by Australian universities at the postgraduate level. In order to assess psychology's current postgraduate education and training for career development practice, we conducted a preliminary review of the postgraduate degrees that would, at least according to the requirements of their respective Colleges, prepare graduates for the career development practice.

Method

A list of current accredited postgraduate psychology programs was downloaded from the APS (2007) and the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council's (APAC, 2007) websites. The specialist postgraduate master programs approved by each of the relevant APS Colleges—Educational and Developmental, Organisational, and Counselling—were selected for analysis. Publicly available program specifications and

course information¹ (where accessible) were downloaded from university websites and systematically examined for their alignment with the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners (CICA, 2006). The course information available on the university websites was a brief overview of the content of the courses, generally no longer than a three-four sentence paragraph. Traditional research-only PhD degrees were excluded from the search. The competency categories in the Standards include: career development theory, labour market, advanced communication skills, ethical practice, diversity, information and resource management, and professional practice. Areas of specialisation include: assessment, counselling, program delivery, working with people with disabilities, project management, and employer liaison.

An analysis was conducted on the available course descriptions, whereby key words or phrases matching the Standards were identified. The following are examples of the key words or phrases used in the analysis: career, vocation, career development, career development theories, career management, work-related interests, work-related skills, career assessment, vocational assessment, labour market, advanced communication, counselling, program delivery, ethical practice, diversity, disabilities, vocational rehabilitation, occupational rehabilitation, information and resource management, technology, and professional practice. The analysis was an iterative process, whereby the course descriptions were initially scanned to familiarise the researcher with their content. The second review of the courses involved highlighting

¹ Australian universities use different terminology. In this paper the term *program* refers to degree (i.e., Master) and the term *course* may refer to unit, subject, or topic (i.e., the component blocks combined to make up a specific major and degree).

key words or phrases that aligned with the Standards. A table was then created to cross-reference the content of the courses with the Standards. The CICA Standards were used as column headers and the university programs were listed as row headers. A further read-through of the course descriptions was carried out, this time entering course names along with a brief description of the content as it related to each of the standards, into the table. Finally, peripheral information was removed from the table so that it included only a brief summary of the course content.

Results

Table 1 provides a list of the postgraduate Psychology programs that were included in the analysis. A review of the programs listed in Table 1 indicated that the majority entailed courses in counselling, assessment, ethics, and professional practice, which are included in the Professional Standards as core competencies or areas of specialisation. Inspection of the courses revealed clear consistency with the Professional Standards; therefore this finding requires no further elucidation.

Insert Table 1 Here

Table 2 presents a cross-reference between postgraduate program content and the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners. Two of the standards are not included in the table (i.e., Information and Resource Management and Professional Practice) because all of the programs included professional practice and none of the programs referred to Information and Resource Management in the context of career development.

Insert Table 2 Here

The review did not reveal any specific course content in career development in the postgraduate degrees in Counselling Psychology or Educational/Developmental Psychology. As Table 2 indicates, several psychology departments offered courses that contained some career development theory and/or vocational assessment: Murdoch University, Griffith University, the University of Queensland, the University of New South Wales, the University of Adelaide, and the University of South Australia. The courses were offered as part of their Organisational or Occupational Psychology postgraduate programs.

The course descriptions for Murdoch University's Occupational Psychology Master and Doctorate programs indicate that the course *PSY562 Psychological Assessment Methods* includes reference to vocational tests, and the course *EDU645 Adult Learning and Education and Work* includes an examination of theories and research in vocational settings. Three core courses from Griffith University's Organisational Psychology postgraduate program include topics directly related to career development. According to the course descriptions, the course *7416PSY The Employment Lifecycle* considers issues such as choosing a career, transitioning within and out of the workforce, and vocational interests. The course description for *7403PSY Psychological Assessment* mentions vocational assessment, career decision making, and vocational choice, and the course *7407PSY Psychology of Learning & Development* focuses on training and development, but includes a consideration of how people develop and manage their careers. One course from The University of Queensland's

Master of Organisational Psychology program makes a passing reference to vocational interests in the course, *Advanced Personnel Assessment*.

Two courses from the University of New South Wales' Master of Psychology (Organisational) program include some career development content in their course descriptions: *PSYC7001 Psychological Assessment* includes training in the assessment of vocational interests, and *PSYC7115 Vocational Interview & Counselling* includes theory and practice of career choice and development, approaches to career decision-making, and the role of occupation information.

Two courses from the Master of Psychology (Work and Organisational) program offered by the University of South Australia include references to career development. Career development is a topic mentioned in the description for the course, *Assessment and Development Centre*; and the course *Advanced Work and Organisational Psychology* includes theories of career development.

Discussion

This review revealed that the majority of core competencies stipulated in the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners are appropriately treated within Australian postgraduate degrees in Organisational, Educational/Developmental, and Counselling Psychology. Given psychology's history, theoretical base, advanced status as a regulated profession, this result was not surprising. This is reassuring for psychologists who are qualified with a master degree in any of those College specialisations, and can demonstrate a significant history of work in the career development industry, in combination with relevant ongoing professional development. They should be reasonably situated to seek public acknowledgement of their status as a Career Development Practitioner via the

alternative pathway to full professional membership of an Association under the aegis of CICA. However, the review's results are not so reassuring on the topic of learning the core competency of career development theory and the specialist competency of vocational assessment. The review found that degrees in organisational psychology offered specific training in these areas; however, degrees in educational and developmental, and counselling psychology were limited in their offerings. The competency pertaining to labour market studies was limited across the majority of degrees, with only a master of organisational psychology degree explicitly covering the topic.

The training and supervision of psychologists is thrown into critical relief when another profession emerges, and then takes a market position within one of psychology's traditional sub-disciplines and industry segments (cf. for counselling psychology, Patton, *in press*; Pryor & Bright, 2007), along with the support of professional associations, such as the Career Development Association of Australia, previously the Australian Association of Career Counsellors (see McMahon, 2006). After all, if it is the case that an individual who undertakes a Postgraduate Certificate specialising in career development (and thus has probably completed more courses of study in career development than an equivalent student of a Master/Doctor of Psychology degree), and then continues on with studies articulating upward to Master/Doctor of Education, for example, then it would be fair to ask the question: Who is the better qualified to practice in the area of career development? The implications of this question can lead in several directions.

The first implication pertains to the client. How should the consumer market be informed as to which profession is the better qualified to offer career development

services? It is likely that individual clients and agencies that purchase career development services on behalf of their own individual clients or for their organisational clients' employees (e.g., insurance providers) would be keen to hear the answer to the question. As part of its responsibilities to the community broadly, the CICA will promulgate the Standards and the qualifications framework it has established for those standards. We are concerned that psychology's position may not be fully assured as the Standards take hold in the market. Secondly, what are the possible ramifications pertaining to the opposition of a psychologist and a non-psychologist both claiming status as a career development practitioner? How would an arbitrator decide the more qualified if such a question were put? Surely, an arbitrator would refer to the extant industry Standards and qualifications framework; and where would psychologists feature in that scenario? Finally, as professionals in the field, supervisors, and educators, we are concerned with the question of how the training of psychologists can be measured up against a new industry benchmark of practice and training requirements. How can we assure our students that they are indeed learning professional knowledge and skills that will prepare them for their professional futures if there are discrepancies between APS competencies and those stipulated for an industry sector? If the APS-endorsed postgraduate degrees and the Colleges' competencies for specialised psychological practice represent the most advanced form of training for Australian psychologists, then the results of this review should raise questions regarding psychologists' being at risk of inadequate preparation for career development practice, or at least being perceived as such in the public eye.

Limitations

The review is limited with respect to its coverage of postgraduate degrees only, for it is possible that some universities offer specific courses in their undergraduate degrees. However, given that postgraduate training is tantamount to *de rigueur* for professional registration as a psychologist, our limited selection seems quite appropriate for the purpose of benchmarking against “entry qualifications”. Furthermore, given that the review used only publicly available internet-based information readily accessible at front-facing, higher levels of program web pages, we admit that the review would be unable to drill down and uncover more detailed information at the lower levels, and the subtle means by which vocational psychology is being taught in various courses. It would not be unreasonable to counter this criticism by suggesting that those teaching vocational psychology subtly within their courses should have clearer public documentation which better reveals course content. Furthermore, we admit that this type of public web information can be occasionally unreliable due to changes in programs and the lag in publishing new web pages.

Recommendation

The purpose of this study was to provide a preliminary survey of vocational psychology training for psychologists in Australia. Directly linked to this study’s limitation, with respect to analysing only publicly available website information about courses, we recommend that a future study undertakes a comprehensive audit of program and course structure and content. Such a definitive analysis would enable degree providers to better understand their degree programs’ alignment with the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners, and perhaps

reinvigorate interest in the teaching and learning of the discipline of vocational psychology.

In reflecting on the history of vocational psychology, Savickas and Baker (2005) stated that “the field of vocational psychology is at a low ebb” (p. 15). Part of this apparent lethargy in the field can be attributed to the teaching of vocational psychology and its professional practices. This study revealed that postgraduate qualifications in organisational psychology by and large provide a strong foundation for career development practice; however, the same cannot be said of degrees in educational and developmental, and counselling psychology. It is our hope that the APS and Australian universities which train psychologists adopt a policy and a campaign to assert the profession’s historical, theoretical, research, and professional commitment to vocational psychology.

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Table 1

Approved and Accredited Specialist Postgraduate Psychology Programs for APS Colleges of Education and Developmental, Organisational Psychologists, and Counselling Psychologists

| University | Program | APS College |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Curtin University of Technology | MPsych (Counselling) | Couns |
| La Trobe University | MPsych (Couns) | Couns |
| Macquarie University | MCounsPsych ¹ | Couns |
| Macquarie University | DPsych(CounsPsych) ¹ | Couns |
| Macquarie University | PhD/MCounsPsych ¹ | Couns |
| Monash University | MPsych (Couns) | Couns |
| Queensland University of Technology | MCounPsych ¹ | Couns |
| Swinburne University of Technology | MPsych (CounsPsych) | Couns |
| Swinburne University of Technology | DPsych (CounsPsych) | Couns |
| Australian Catholic University | MPsych (Child & Family) | Ed/Dev |
| Australian Catholic University | DPsych (Child & Family) | Ed/Dev |
| Australian Catholic University | MPsych/PhD (Child & Family) | Ed/Dev |
| Monash University | MPsych (Ed&Dev) | Ed/Dev |
| Queensland University of Technology | MPsych (Ed&Dev) | Ed/Dev |
| RMIT – Bundoora | MPsych (Ed&Dev) | Ed/Dev |
| RMIT – Bundoora | DPsych (Ed&Dev) | Ed/Dev |
| RMIT – Bundoora | PhD (Educ & Dev) | Ed/Dev |
| University of Melbourne | MPsych (EdPsych) | Ed/Dev |
| University of Melbourne | DPsych (EdPsych) | Ed/Dev |
| University of Western Australia | MPsych (App Dev) | Ed/Dev |
| University of Western Australia | MPsych/Dip Ed (App Dev) | Ed/Dev |
| University of Western Australia | MPsych/PhD (App Dev) | Ed/Dev |
| University of Western Sydney | MPsych (Ed & Dev) | Ed/Dev |
| Curtin University of Technology | MPsych (Org) | Org |
| Deakin University | MIndustrial&OrgPsych | Org |

| | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----|
| Griffith University | MPsych (Org) | Org |
| Griffith University | PhD (Org) | Org |
| Griffith University | MOrgPsych | Org |
| Griffith University | DPsych (Org) | Org |
| Griffith University | PhD OrgPsych | Org |
| Macquarie University | MOrgPsych | Org |
| Macquarie University | DPsych(OrgPsych) | Org |
| Macquarie University | PhD/MOrgPsych | Org |
| Monash University | MPsych(Org) | Org |
| Monash University | DPsych(Org) | Org |
| Murdoch University | MAppPsych/PhD (Occupational) | Org |
| Murdoch University | MAppPsych (Occupational) | Org |
| Murdoch University | DPsych (Occupational) | Org |
| | MPsych (Org & Human Factors) | Org |
| University of Adelaide | | |
| University of Melbourne | MPsych (Org/Industrial) | Org |
| University of Melbourne | DPsych (Org/Industrial) | Org |
| University of Melbourne | MPsych (Org/Ind) / PhD | Org |
| University of New South Wales | MPsych (Organisational) | Org |
| University of New South Wales | MPsych/PhD (Organisational) | Org |
| University of Queensland | MOrgPsych | Org |
| University of Queensland | PhD (Organisational Psychology) | Org |
| University of South Australia | MPsych (Work & Org) | Org |
| University of South Australia | DPsych (Org) | Org |
| University of Western Australia | MPsych (Ind&Org) | Org |
| University of Western Australia | MPsych/PhD (Ind&Org) | Org |

Note. Couns = Counselling Psychology; Ed/Dev = Educational and Developmental Psychology; and Org

= Organisational Psychology. ¹No longer offered

Table 2

Cross-Reference of University Postgraduate Programs to Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners

| University | Program | CD theory | Labour Market | Advanced Communication | Ethical Practice | Diversity |
|------------|------------------------------|---|---------------|---|---|--|
| Griffith | MOrgPsych DPsych (Org) | <p>7416PSY:The Employment Lifecycle – choosing a career, transitioning within and out of workforce, vocational interests</p> <p>7403PSY:Psychological Assessment, includes vocational assessment, career decision-making, & vocational choice</p> <p>7407PSY:Psychology of Learning & Development – how people develop and manage careers is considered</p> | | 7406PSY:Counselling in the workplace (no specific reference to career development) | 7404PSY Change Management | |
| QUT | MPsych (Ed&Dev) | SPN640: Developmental and educational assessment, learning difficulties assessment | | PYN601:Counselling & Consultation in Educational & Developmental Psychology (no specific reference to career development) | PYN603: Professional Practice in Educational & Developmental Psychology | SPN643: Developmental Processes & Disability |

| University | Program | CD theory | Labour Market | Advanced Communication | Ethical Practice | Diversity |
|------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| UQ | MOrgPsych | PSYC7494: Advanced Personnel Assessment (includes reference to vocational interests) | | PSYC7434: Organisational Communication & PSYC7604 Professional Skill Development for Organisational Psychologists (no specific reference to career development) | PSYC7604: Professional Skills Development for Organisational Psychologists | |
| Macquarie | MCounsPsych (No longer available) | | | | | |
| | MOrgPsych | PSYO940: Psychological Assessment & Evaluation PSYC911: Advanced Lifespan Psychology for Counsellors (no specific reference to career development) | | PSYO921 Organisational Change & Development (no specific reference to career development) | PSY863: Research Design & Evaluation | |
| UNSW | MPsych (Org) | PSYC7001: Psychological Assessment 1 (includes reference to vocational interests) PSYC7115: Vocational Interviewing & Counselling – theory and practice of career choice & development, career decision-making | PSYC7115: Vocational Interviewing & Counselling includes the role of occupational information | PSYC7115: Vocational Interviewing & Counselling | Four courses in professional & ethical practice (e.g., PSYC7124) include career development workshops | PSYC7115: Vocational Interviewing & Counselling includes reference to minority groups |

| University | Program | CD theory | Labour Market | Advanced Communication | Ethical Practice | Diversity |
|-------------|------------------------------|---|---------------|--|---|---|
| UWS | MPsych (Ed & Dev) | Psychological Assessment; Developmental Psychology (no specific reference to career development) | | Counselling and ethical practice (no specific reference to career development) | Core Skills: Counselling & Ethical Practice | Counselling Children, Adolescents, & Families (no specific reference to career development) |
| UniAdelaide | MPsych (Org & Human Factors) | PSYCHOL7207 Human Resource Management – considers issues of career development PSYCHOL7211: Psychological Assessment: (no specific reference to career development) | | PSYCHOL7209: Organisational Behaviour & Management includes communication as a topic (no specific reference to career development) | PSYCHOL7210: Professional & Ethical Practice | PSYCHOL7207 Ji,am Resource Management considers cultural diversity in workplace, PSYCHOL7110: Rehabilitation & Disability |
| UniSA | MPsych (Work & Org) | Psychological Assessment course (no specific reference to career development) Assessment & Development Centre - includes career development as a topic Advanced Work & Organisational Psychology - makes reference to career development theories | | Counselling (not specific to career development) | Professional Psychology – Includes ethical issues | |

| University | Program | CD theory | Labour Market | Advanced Communication | Ethical Practice | Diversity |
|------------|--------------------------------|---|---------------|--|--|--|
| ACU | MPsych (Child & Family/Ed&Dev) | Psychological assessment courses (e.g., PSYC600 Clinical Assessment) (not specific to career development) | | PSYC604 Approaches to Counselling & Theory (no specific reference to career development) | PSYC602 & PSYC604 – Includes ethical issues/principles | |
| Deakin | MIndustrial & OrgPsych | HPS758 Psychological Assessment in Organisations (no specific reference to career development) | | HPS720 Conflict, Negotiation, & Mediation (no specific reference to career development) | HPS759 Issues in Professional Ind/Org Psychology; PPS758 Psychological Assessment in Organisations | |
| La Trobe | MPsych (Couns) | PSY5MAA; PSY5MAB - Psychological assessment courses (no specific reference to career development) | | Individual & group counselling courses (e.g., PSY5MGC; PSY5MSA) - no specific reference to career development) | PSY5MAA Psychological Assessment | |
| Monash | MPsych (Couns) | EDF6502 Clinical Assessment & Psychopathology (no specific reference to career development) | | EDF6503 Advanced Professional Counselling Psychology (no specific reference to career development) | EDF6503 Advanced Professional Counselling Psychology Ethical issues | EDF6501 Counselling Psychology: Theory, Research & Practice |
| | MPsych (Ed&Dev) | EDF6511 Cognitive, Personality & Educational Assessment (no specific reference to vocational assessment) | | EDF6504 Anxiety Disorders & Counselling Skills (no specific reference to career development) | EDF6512: Intervention Across the Lifespan & Research Implications | EDF6510 Exceptionality: Assessment, Intervention & Research; EDF6511 Cognitive, Personality & Educational Assessment |

| University | Program | CD theory | Labour Market | Advanced Communication | Ethical Practice | Diversity |
|------------|---|--|---------------|---|---|---|
| Monash | MPsych (Org) | MOP5021 Personnel Assessment - (includes assessment of personality abilities, and specific work skills) | | MOP6031 Psychological Interventions in Organisations (no specific reference to career development) | MOP5011 Legal & Ethical Issues in Professional Practice | Course objectives refer to cultural diversity |
| RMIT | MPsych (Ed&Dev) DPsych (Ed&Dev) | Assessment & Intervention courses (no specific reference to career development) | | Foundations of Practice (no specific reference to career development) | Foundations of Practice – refers to ethical principles | |
| Swinburne | MPsych (CounsPsych) DPsych (CounsPsych) | HAY527/HAY627 Advanced Psychological Assessment (no specific reference to career development) | | HAY530-HAY630 Counselling Theories & Skills (no specific reference to career development) | HAY543-HAY643 Professional, Ethical & Legal Issues | |
| UniMelb | MPsych (Org/Industrial) DPsych (Org/Ind) | 512 990 Assessment in Organisational Contexts (no specific reference to career development) | | 512 951 Interviewing and Counselling (no specific reference to career development) | 512 907 Ethics & Professional Issues | |
| | MPsych (EdPsych) DPsych (EdPsych) | 476-651 Psychological Tests (no specific reference to career development) 476-648 Differences (research in interests considered, but no specific reference to career development) | | 476-649 Working in Groups (no specific reference to career development) 476-652 Counselling Skills for Educational Psychologists (no specific reference to career development) | 476-651 Psychological Tests (refers to ethics) | 476-653 Exceptionality: Assessment & Intervention (no specific reference to career development) |

| University | Program | CD theory | Labour Market | Advanced Communication | Ethical Practice | Diversity |
|------------|---|---|---------------|---|--|---|
| Curtin | MPsych (Counselling) | Psychology 711 - Psychological Assessment (no specific reference to career development) | | Psychology 705 - Interventions Over The Lifespan; Psychology 795 - Preparation for Professional Practice (Counselling Psychology); Psychology 706 - Group Psychotherapy (no specific reference to career development) | Psychology 795 - Preparation for Professional Practice (Counselling Psychology); | |
| | MPsych (Org) | No details available for this program | | | | |
| Murdoch | MAppPsych (Occ) DPsych (Occl) | PSY562 Psychological Assessment Methods (includes vocational tests) EDU645 Adult learning in education and work – examines theories and research in vocational settings as a component | | PSY531 & PSY532 Principles of Counselling; PSY624 Counselling: Working with Organisations (no specific reference to career development) | PSY563 Professional Practice and Organisational Consulting | EDU646 Cultural diversity in learning and working |
| UWA | MPsych (App Dev) MPsych/Dip Ed MPsych (Ind&Org) | No information available on course content for these programs | | | | |

